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Some Creation Stories

Told by Tribal Peoples of The Tibetan-Burmese Group in Yunnan

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The following is a record of sixteen stories about the origin of mankind, elves, insects and fishes, rice and grains, tobacco and wines. These were written down as told by the natives in the borderland of Yunnan in the year 1936 when an investigation was made of the tribal peoples there. (See map of the distribution of aborigines in Yunnan, Page 2.)

Myths and stories, in a simple society, are not merely after dinner talks or subject matters for pastime, but they are recognized as things which actually took place in the past. They look upon the myths in the same way the Chinese believe in the Golden Era of San-huang-wu-ti (three monarchs and five emperors). Their myths live in their everyday life; and thus, from myths, it is not difficult for us to have a glimpse of their mass beliefs, morals and the principles of conformity in social behaviors. In these myths, there are many intricate scenes, winding perspectives, attractive descriptions, numerous love affairs and adventures. And this is no less the reason that it has become one of the indispensable subject matter of pastime for the monotonous living in simple societies. Even we, upon hearing these tales, would feel their vivid persuasiveness, and be thus enlivened by them. From the viewpoint of comparative anthropology, to study the problems of cultural propagation, evolution, and the near and distant relations among various racial groups, myths are also a paramount object for research. Owing to the lack of comparative data, this essay will be limited to a narration of the original tales to serve as a reference for future study.

I. Moso (who call themselves Nashi)

1. Li-chiang hsien

In the distant ancient time, the Deluge had become calamities which drowned out all mankind. The only survival was a man by the name Zungtzerliri, who, by hiding himself in a drum, narrowly escaped. As the Deluge gradually rose, the drum ascended with it. When the roars of the water had ceased, he broke out from the drum

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and found himself already in Heaven. He then encountered a maid whose name was Zweherbebermi. The maid said to him: "You are a mortal on the earth. Why do you come to Heaven?" The man answered: "There is a great flood on earth. My kindred have all died. Since I have no dear ones left, I have roamed at will to Heaven." The maid said: "I too have no beloved ones. Why not you and I the two of us, befriend and love each other?" The man was then taken to her house, and hid in a bamboo basket behind a door. In the meantime, her father, whose name was Zwe-la-Ap'u, abruptly returned, and inhaling the odor of a stranger, he called out: "Whence came this wild dog in my house?" He, however, made no further investigation but kept on sharpening a knife on a rock night and day, and talked to himself: "Verily, I know there is a strange creature in the house; I must kill him." Then, her mother said: "Please do not raise your hands; let me find out about it later." The mother then questioned her daughter, and she answered: "It is no outsider, but one who has come from the earth. An extra man in our house does no harm. Besides, when the sun rises, you may order him to dry provisions and grains, or if it is cloudy and raining, to dig furrows and clean out the water; but I beg you for his life." The father, who had overheard the conversation between the mother and the daughter, broke in and reproached: "Don't you be tempted by the sorcerer. Bring him forth, and I will personally examine him." The maid opened the basket and led the man to her father. The father had known people well; it required only one look for him to tell a good man from a bad one. He looked over his hands, and learned that he was an intelligent man. He then told the mother: "Though this man is fairly intelligent, he is neither one of our kind nor good enough to to be a slave. Let us spare his life but drive him down to the world below." But the mother insisted that tests be given to determine his ability before making any decision, for she too grew very fond of the man. After her repeated intercessions, the father pretended to consent.

At nightfall, the father commanded the man to spend the night with him on a cliff, from which he intended to throw the man off in his slumber and to effect his death. Both the mother and the daughter suspected the father's intention, and privately told the man: "Tonight as you go to sleep with father, you must take with you a blanket in which a big rock is to be wrapped; and leave it by father's side. Then go secretly to sleep somewhere else." The man went, following the instruction. Toward midnight the father kicked off the rock, which

fell into a mountain torrent and struck dead a roebuck. As the father woke up the next morning, and saw the man was still about, he figured out another plot and said: "Last night when the rock fell, it must have killed a beast. You may go fetch it and share it as food with me; but tonight, I will choose to sleep by the side of a river, and you are to keep me company. "The mother and the daughter again uncovered his intention, and told the man: "Tonight you will again take with you a blanket with a rock wrapped inside. Place it by father's feet, and also, leave a piece of log between you two; adversity may thus be avoided. " The man obeyed. Toward midnight, the father again kicked the rock, which fell into the river and struck dead some fish. On the morrow, the father found the man was still around, and said to him: "You may go into the river to catch some fish; we two shall eat together. But when we finish eating, you must set out to look for tiger's cubs for me. " The man, following his words, set out to look for cubs, but found none. Instead, he returned with the meat of a roebuck. The father became angry, and said: "This is no tiger but roebuck, why cheat me? Go quickly to search for it; otherwise, death will be the punishment. " The mother and the daughter then told the man: "Tigers are mostly in places where the sun cannot be seen, but cubs like to stay under the sunlight. Go look for it. " Following their words, the man camouflaged himself in a piece of tiger skin and thus succeeded in getting the cubs.

The father, finding that he had failed in his scheme, worked out another, and said to the man: "You will have to cut down, within a day's time, a forest as large as nine mou of land. " The man said: "It is impossible to do one mou in a day, let alone nine mou! " The mother and the daughter, consoling him privately, said: "Do not worry. Tomorrow you may carry with you nine axes to /4/ the forest; mother will send some men to help you. " Without failing, nine mou of forest were chopped down when night approached. Then the father said again: "Tomorrow you must burn up all the woods, within a day's time, till they are reduced to ashes. " The following morning, the man carried out the order by burning up all the woods. But the father said to him again: "You must sow grains upon nine mou of farm within a day's time. " The mother and the daughter again instructed the man: "All you have to do is to sow nine

●993 grains upon each mou, for when father returns tomorrow, he would
537 order you to collect, in a day's time, all the grains sowed." The man carried it out accoringly, and returned. As expected, the father said to him: "Within tomorrow's time, you will have to pick up all the grains you have sowed." Since the man had listened to the ladies, he was able to carry back the unsowed grains. The father then ordered a counting of the grains, and asked: "Where are the three halves of grain?" The man examined and answered: "Two halves were eaten by the ants, and the other half was in the stomach of a dove." The father said: "You must get them back!" The man had no alternative but to leave for the hills to look for them. Observing some ants under a rock, he picked one/of them/ up and broke it into two joints for the two halves of rice. The ant was an insect with a single body, but today, it has two joints. That is how it happened. He then saw a dove. As he was about to shoot it with an arrow, the maid, who was weaving in a nearby spinning chamber, saw it, and hurriedly threw a shuttle at his arm. The arrow flew instantly away and hit the dove. The other half of grain was taken out after cutting open the dove. As the three halves of grain were found, he took them to the father.

Upon seeing the grains, the father said no words; but after a while he said: "What have you come to do in Heaven?" The man said: "Since all the human beings on earth have died out, I have come to Heaven to search for a companion." The father asked: "Do you want to marry my daughter?" The man answered: "I dare not, but since the people of the world have all died, and I, being up in Heaven, would like to have some one, whether good or bad." The father asked: "How much silver have you brought with you?" The man answered: "There is now only a great deluge on earth. I have escaped with nothing but my life. But ever since I came up to Heaven, you have ordered me to get roebuck, catch fishes, hunt tigers, cut down woods, burn the hills, sow grains and collect provisions, all of which I have accomplished. These may well be regarded as the price for the companion I am seeking." The father then asked: "Do you have relatives (meaning special abilities)?" The answer was: "My relatives are those who have survived the beatings and the murders. (Pointing out that he had not died even though the father had tried to kill him.)" The father then said: "Well, since my wife and daughter both have agreed that you are the right one, what have I got to object?" He then married his daughter to him. Before long, the maid was pregnant. The parents said (to them):

"You must go to the world below to propagate the species; thus, you can no longer stay in Heaven." Then the couple knelt to bid their parents farewell, and went down, hand in hand, to the world below. 793 539

Somehow, the two had incurred the enmity of their heavenly neighbors, who, by blocking out the way with clouds and mists, made it impossible for the two to get out even after a thorough search. All of a sudden, they encountered a white crane and entreating it for a ride, they made their way down to earth. In the meantime, the Flood had receded. With the exception of some buzzing bees, no other creatures were left;so they built a hut with straws. There they lived a month and gave birth to triplet sons, who proved to be mutes. The couple's mother heard of it in Heaven, and knew that it could be of help only if they themselves prayed to their brother and sister-in-law (the oldest son of their heavenly parents and his wife). Therefore, she dispatched a butterfly as a messenger to come down to the world to inform them. The couple then made a sacrifice to their brother and sister-in-law. As soon as the prayer ended, the triplet sons, all at once, were able to speak. But their languages were different, one from the other. The oldest son spoke Kutsung (Tibetan) language, the second son, Nashi (Moso) language, and the third, Paitzu (Minchia) language. These triplets were the ancestors of the three tribes.

At the time when the newlyweds were coming down to the world, their parents bestowed on them all kinds of grains and animals except cats and turnips. However, the wife had secretly hidden some turnip seeds in her finger nails, and kittens in her lap. The grains are the foodstuffs commonly used today, and the animals are those twelve that serve as birth symbols; but the turnip is not among the grains just as the cat is not among the symbolic animals. As the father found out in Heaven about the theft of seeds by his daughter, he was in a rage. He said: "Although the /5/ turnips are very solid, I will now make them soft once they are cooked, so that they will not fill the stomach when eaten. And although the cat is a beast, I will make it purr in the stomach so as to make it different from the other beasts." The mother, who had been worrying over the newlyweds' incapability in housekeeping, commanded a dog to go down to the world with an order that they were to comb their hair once a day and eat one meal every three days. However, the memory of the dog failed him, and he got it so mixed up that he told them that three meals were to be

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539 eaten every day, and that hair was to be combed once every three days. This became their present habit. But since an excessive quantity of rice had been eaten, the necessary result was excretion. As a punishment, the dog was ordered to eat the manure.

The daughter had been previously engaged to one heavenly god, Käsinasa. Having heard of her marrying someone else, Käsinasa was greatly exasperated. Hence, he exercised his black art by making frost, snow and epidemics fall onto the human world so as to show his vengeance. He also locked up the gate to Heaven; thence, no mortals could enter as they pleased.

II. Lisu.

1. Tzu-kai village, Salween River (under the Administrative Bureau of Kung-shan).

In the ancient time, as the Deluge rose as high as the heavens, people on earth all died out, leaving but two persons who were brother and sister. The older brother named A-heng-Pa, and the younger sister, A-heng-Ma, had been stranded in a mountain cave together with a dog. Since the good earth was drowned out by the floods, and no foodstuffs were to be obtained, they sent the dog to a heavenly god to beg for grain seeds. The heavenly god placed some grain seeds in the ears of the dog to take back to the mountain cave. The dog wagged its head, and the grain seeds fell onto the earth; thus different kinds of foodstuffs were produced. Among them there was a young melon plant, which produced a huge melon. One day, cries were heard inside the melon. Both the brother and the sister were scared and kowtowed toward heaven to ask for help. Suddenly, a knife fell down from heaven. The brother and sister cut open the melon with the knife, and looked in. From the melon, out jumped five men, of whom three were white, one black, and one with wings. The three whites turned into Lisu, the black one, into Nashi (the Moso of Li-chiang area), and the one who had wings, being scared at the moment when the melon was cut open, flew all the way up to a ledge, and turned into a ghost. That is how ghosts in the human world had their origin.

Later, a god was sent down from Heaven to teach them reading. The three whites wrote down all the words they had learned on a piece of skin which was given by Heaven. The black one had them written down on a rock. While the god returned to Heaven to report, they wandered apart. The three whites walked together while the black one went to another place. On the way, the three whites became

hungry, but could not find anything to eat. In desperation, they ate the skin which had the words on it. As a result, they could only speak but could not write. The black one, who had written down the words he learned on a rock, was able to look them up on the rock whenever he forgot.

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2. Wei-hsi-lo-kuo village, Mekong River (Wei-hsi hsien).

The period of the Vast Wilderness was divided into three stages. The first stage was named Chu-fu-ya, during which the size of man was a little over five inches. The utensils they used were small. Thus, the size of a pot was that of an egg shell, the size of a bowl, the husk of rice. At that time, the men had little energy; so they could not engage in exploitation and creation. The second stage was named Miou-shu-miou-hsieng-ya. The size of man was a little over one foot. They had made some progress. But, unfortunately, calamities from Heaven prevailed, and there appeared in the sky seven suns and seven moons which, drying up everything with an intensive heat, set the entire earth in smoke and caused all the plants to wither. Then a drought followed, which had lasted for three days /sic/ before the people went up to the mountains to pray for rain. Rain descended from heaven, and it did not stop after three consecutive months. Thereupon, floods burst forth from hills and mountains, inundated the world, and thus wiped out mankind. /6/ The third stage was called Wa-e-hsei-mei-ya, which was named after the reign of one demon, Wa-e-hsei-mei. This demon was huge beyond measure, and all the cloth woven by the Lisu people for a period of three years was not enough to cut a pair of trousers for him. Seven pots of rice were not enough to fill his stomach. And the quiver carried by this demon could contain a big bear. Since the people were unable to supply him with food, which the demon had exacted from them, they could no longer stand his molestations and resorted to run, one after another, for the valleys. There, they mated with the monkeys and apes, and soon, they themselves became monkeys and apes, thus marking the extinction of mankind.

Later, a god descended from Heaven onto the earth. The name of the god was E-yi-pa, who brought with him a melon seed and planted it on a farm. It grew and grew, finally bloomed, and bore a melon, bigger than a bamboo basket, ten feet high and 20 feet in circumference. Men were often heard talking in the melon. The heavenly god waited until it grew ripe, and with a long knife, he first cut open the east end of the melon from which, unexpectedly,

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two ghosts (Ni) jumped out. Then the south end was cut open, and two wolves emerged. Afterwards, the west end was cut, and two snakes wriggled out. The heavenly god was greatly enraged at the birth of these three kinds of venomous creatures. He then unsheathed the knife and cut the melon, from the north to the south, into two halves. In the east half, there was a boy named A-heng-Pa, and in the west half, a girl, named A-heng-Ma. The two were able to speak and walk at their birth. No suckling was done prior to their eating solid food. The heavenly god adopted them as his son and daughter. As they grew up to wisdom and beauty, the regret was that at the time no other human beings existed to mate with them. The heavenly god had no alternative but to coax the two, brother and sister, into marrying each other in order to propagate the human species. The two refused and, mocking the heavenly god, they said: "We, born of the same bone and flesh, cannot contract a marriage that is incest." The heavenly god said: "This will be all right, for Heaven is going to employ you two for propagating the human species in the world. Do not oppose the will of Heaven. I have a grindstone: You, my son will take the upper portion; and you, my daughter, the lower portion. The two of you will each stand on the top of a mountain and throw down the portions of the grindstone so that they will roll into the torrent. If the upper and lower portions of the grindstone unite, then it denotes that you two may get married. If not, then you may do as you wish and you may not get married." The two agreed to the heavenly god's words, each throwing down the portions of the grindstone from atop two mountains. When the por[illegible]s of the grindstone rolled into the botto[illegible] torrent, they tal[illegible], as properly as could be, one upon th[illegible] The heavenly god was greatly elated upon witnessing it, and r[illegible]he two.

After their marriage, the two became unusually devoted to each other. Ten months later they gave birth to triplet sons. The oldest son was name[illegible]cha-gk-Mu, and being wise and handsome, he was employed to rule the people and became an official. The second son, Tcha-li-bi-mu by name, possessed the wisdom to commune with spirits and being expert in divination, became a wizard. The third son, Hsia-ne-la-mu by name, was industrious in craftsmanship and became a technician. Consequently, the world was well ruled. Thence, the three men married the daughters of the common people, and thus there came into being, mankind in the world. (The sudden appearance of the daughters of the common people was not explained.)

3. Yen-wa village, Mekong River (Wei-hsi hsien).

In the distant ancient time, there once lived a wise carpenter who was able to make puppets which looked not only the very images of real people but could also move about. At that time, the entire universe was a vast wilderness uninhabited by mankind except the carpenter, his wife and a daughter. The divine artisan reckoned that it was high time for mankind to multiply themselves on the boundless earth; if not, the earth would grow aged and the heaven, wild. One day, the divine artisan, while talking with his wife, said: "I am going to the hills to carve puppets. I will make them capable of moving about, speaking, drinking and eating, and even bearing children. They will be cast in my own image and so similar to me that you two, mother and daughter, would not be able to tell the difference. This will be my way to propagate the human species who shall, /in turn/ bear children and raise them." His wife said: "Do you really possess such divine art?" The artisan said: "I do possess the divine art in making wooden figures the very image of myself, and if you mother and daughter can identify me among them, then I will confess that I have lost." /7/ On the second day, the daughter went delivering food to her father who was somewhere in the hills. Observing there were thirteen men who resembled her father, she failed to differentiate her real father from the puppets. So the food she brought was distributed to the thirteen men. Upon her return she told her mother everything. The mother said: "You are young in years. That is why you could not recognize your father. Your father has a characteristic which I can tell."

On the following day, his wife went delivering rice. All the thirteen men came to get their food; and his wife nearly failed to identify her husband for the twelve wooden images and the divine artisan were completely alike in every sense and every way. His wife, being nimble-minded in moments of desperation, told the thirteen men to stand still and said to them: "The rice I have brought is for my husband to eat, not for you puppets." As she was saying this, she carefully watched the faces of the thirteen men, and observed that one of them had a few beads of perspiration on his nose. Knowing that he was her own husband, she stepped forward and said to him: "You might be able to deceive your daughter but you could not fool your old wife." Thus, the wooden figures retreated into the mountain forests, mated with apes and monkeys, and since have produced all the species of

mankind. The present Lisu people are also one of those species, whose fathers were puppets, and mothers, apes and monkeys. Hence the Lisu like woods and sleep on wood, which is also used for marking years. A small pine is to be planted upon the birth of a child. When the person dies, this tree is cut down and its cambium rings are examined to determine his life span. Wooden blocks are erected on graves in memory of the deceased.

III. Ch'iutzu (who call themselves Duru)

1. So-ch'ieh village, Tu-lung River (under the Administrative Bureau of Kung-shan).

(A)

In the distant ancient time, living creatures came into being as a result of the intercourse between the sun and the moon. But all the living creatures were stupid round-shaped masses that were chaotic and indistinguishable. Thereafter, a god of the snow mountains, by the name of Ka-Wa-Ka-P'u, turned snow into clean water to lave the various creatures, and did away with their appendages and tumors so that different species were produced. The first to appear was mankind, /consisting of/ a man and a woman. Then birds, beasts, insects and fishes made their appearance with respective sex distinctions. The man and woman mated between themselves and multiplied to become the mankind of today. The rest of the creatures also multiplied, and out of them evolved the various kinds of animals in the world today. After the marriage of man and woman, their progeny thrived, but there were no grains on earth for food. Therefore the husband, Mupongo, rode on sunbeams and ascended Heaven to steal grain seeds. Originally, he intended to sow the grain seeds only on the land where he lived, but unexpectedly, winds blew at his sowing hand and the seeds were scattered all over the world. That was why there are grains everywhere nowadays. Although they had grains, yet there was no fire. So prayers were offered to the heavenly gods to request the means to make fire. While praying, his hands were playing with some rattan, and unintentionally, he rubbed the rattan against the trunk of a tree. As the friction produced enough heat, sparks emerged. The means to make fire was thus learned. Later, Mupongo's children were sick. Riding a bee, he flew to Heaven to ask the heavenly god, Ka-Wa-Ka-P'u, for medicine. When he arrived at the gate of Heaven, he called out: "Open the door!" An answer came inside the door: "Where comes this earthly being who knocks at the door? Go away quickly!"

Mupongo begged and begged, and was finally let in. The god then gave him some medicine; but, in the meantime, the bee which carried him threw off its burden and flew away, leaving him to fall from Heaven. While falling, he came to a lake, and in his carelessness, the medicine fell from his bosom into the lake. Consequently, the water of the lake had the taste of wine. Mupongo returned with empty hands, and the couple blamed each other for their children's death. But afterwards, they bore more children. However, it was because of this that the Ch'iutzu have wines but no medicine; and for the same reason their population has never thrived.

/8/ (B)

After the marriage between brother and sister, the wife went up to Heaven to visit the heavenly god, Ka-Wa-Ka-P'u. The god told her: "I have bees and honey. I will give you some bees." He put the bees in a bamboo tube and told her to take it to her husband but not to look into it on her way /home/. As the woman descended to mid-air, she could not refrain from having a look at the bees. But as soon as she opened the lid on the tube, the bees all flew away. These are the wild bees to be found today on the hillside. The next day, the woman went up to Heaven again, and the god gave her another tube. She was told to keep it in a chest in her room when she reached home. But the woman, failing again to restrain herself, opened it to look in before she entered the house. So the bees flew away again, and were all over the eaves and trees near their house. That is why today bees are raised on eaves and trees. Some of the bees turned into mosquitoes which, like the bees, sting people; their sting, however, is itchy but not painful.

(C)

There was a time when no line was drawn between human beings and ghosts, and men were often eaten by ghosts. One day, some ghosts who failed to get food on a high mountain, came to the side of a river. There again, they found no food. As hunger intensified, the ghosts cried out for help. A human voice answered: "I can help you /but/ you must promise first that from now on you would never eat people /again/." The ghosts answered: "Fine, we will never eat people from now on." The voice then said: "Go, look into the river. There will be food in the river." In the meantime, the man

had picked a lot of bamboo leaves which he threw into the river, and which turned into fish. The fish was actually food for the ghosts.

(D)

In the ancient time most people went hunting. One day, a man hunted in the hills and heard some one calling his name and saying: "Wait for me. We shall go together." But the hunter could only hear his voice and failed to locate the man. A moment later, the voice said again: "Wait for me. We shall go together." As before, he failed to see the man. The hunter was horrified, and stretching a bow in one hand while holding a knife in the other, he waited. The voice rose again several times and the hunter got angry. He bawled and railed at it. The voice then said: "You rail at me and bawl at me. I shall not go with you anymore." Since then, men and ghosts each take a different path. Ghosts like to exercise evil influences; hence there are diseases and calamities among people.

2. K'ung-ting village

(A)

In the distant ancient time, the Deluge rose as high as heaven, and mankind was destroyed. But on the mountain of the god Kawakapu, there lived two persons, a man and his sister. The name of the brother was Pang, and that of the sister, Nang. Fearing the possible extinction of human species, they married each other and bore nine sons and nine daughters. The sons and daughters also married each other. The first couple had no names; but after they were married, they became the ancestors of the Tibetans. Of the second couple, the man was named Ging and the woman, Nien; they married each other and became the ancestors of the Ch'iutzu. At that time, these four persons had an archery contest. A piece of iron was the target. It was agreed that whoever hit the target could levy taxes on those who missed. The first couple hit the target and the second couple missed. That is why the Ch'iutzu have to pay taxes to the Tibetans. Of the third couple, the man was named Gong and the woman, Kien; after their marriage, they went to live by the side of the Titzu river, where rattan was produced. They became skilled in braiding baskets with rattan; thus they supplied the Ch'iutzu with rattan baskets. Of the fourth couple, the man was named Tchien, and the woman, Nien; after getting

married, they moved to live in Man Nuen (to the west of Katha in Burma), and became the ancestors of the natives there. No records are available concerning the rest of the nine couples of whom, however, one couple was the ancestors of the Chinese.

(B)

/9/ The heavenly god Mubai had married his daughter to a fellow named Gungeng. One day, the heavenly god took various kinds of grains from his house to that of the Gungengs. On the way, he suddenly became stingy and hid away the grain, leaving only some mixed cereals for his son-in-law. His daughter discovered the grain seeds he had brought; she stole them and placed them beside some ginger. Thus, the grains are found in the human world; but since they have been placed together with ginger, the grains also grow twin ears like the ginger which has double-fork sprouts. All the edible plants in the human world were transmitted by the heavenly god Mubai.

On another day the heavenly god gave his daughter some fish spawns, which were placed in a bamboo basket. The daughter went by a river, and through her negligence, the basket fell into the water. Thus, fishes live in water instead of on land.

(C)

Gungeng's children got sick, and his woman went up to Heaven. The heavenly god gave her some medicine and a bamboo tube, and told her not to look into it before she reached home. The woman had gone half the way, when she came by a lake. Through her negligence, the medicine fell into the lake and the water turned into wine. Furthermore, she failed to restrain herself and opened the bamboo tube which was filled with bees. The bees crowded out, all at once, and flew eastward. That is why today there are bees on the cliffs along the Salween and the Mekong rivers. The woman covered the tube hurriedly with a lid and a few bees were left there. She took the bees home with her and raised them, and they became domestic bees. The Gunggeng couple who were originally kid brother and sister, became the ancestors of mankind after their marriage. (The Gungeng couple are Pang and Nang in story A.)

(D)

In the distant ancient time, human beings and ghosts were able

713 to see each other face to face, and they often hunted together. By
539 and by, the men became busy /in other things /; so the ghosts were sent to watch the traps. As numerous boars, rats and monkeys fell into the traps, the ghosts, without reporting to the men, ate them all by themselves. When questioned by the men, they answered that none was caught. Afterwards, a dog which belonged to one of the families, mistakenly walked into the trap, and was also eaten by the ghosts. The owner, searching for the dog, asked the ghosts if they had seen it. The ghosts said they did not. But it was reasoned that a dog would not wander away like this. The hunters then learned that all the trapped beasts were eaten up by the ghosts. They bawled and railed at the ghosts who, being annoyed, hid up their trails and started to cast evil influences on the men. From then on, men and ghosts lived in their separate worlds, and men had many diseases.

3. Sin-jui village.

In the past when the Deluge rose as high as the heavens, all mankind was obliterated except two persons, a boy and his sister who lived together in a house. As they grew up, they inadvertently mated with each other. Afterwards, they felt it was rather unceremonious; so they placed by a river a bamboo tube and filled it with water. The two had intercourse by the water-filled tube, and prayed to Heaven: "If the bamboo tube does not topple over and the water is not spilled while we two are mating, then it denotes that the Old Heaven permits our getting married and bearing children. If the water-filled tube topples over and the water spills out, then it denotes forbiddance." This lasted for three days and nights, and the water-filled tube was not toppled over. They continued to live together and bear children. There were altogether nine pairs of children, of whom one-half were boys and the other half girls. They lived separately in nine places and became nine clans.

4. Pu-k'ao-wang village

/10/ In the past when the Deluge rose as high as the heavens, and all mankind was obliterated, only two persons survived. They were a kid brother and his sister, who had slept in separate beds. As they woke up, the two found themselves lying in one bed. Feeling that it was unceremonious, a water-filled bamboo tube was

placed between the two; but it was moved away when they woke up again. Then, the two prayed to Heaven: "If it is the will of God that we two should be man and wife, then when the water is splashed on the ground it would turn into nine rivers." When they finished praying, the water was splashed, and it actually turned into nine rivers. Thus, they were married and bore nine sons and nine daughters who, mating among themselves, became nine married couples. Each of the couples occupied a river and lived there, thus multiplying into nine species. The Tu-lung is one of the nine rivers and the Ch'iutzu one of the nine species.

IV. Aka

1. Chiu-fang, Lang-t'sang hsien

Once there lived two brothers who had to support their father, who was too old to do any work. Being extremely poor, the two had arrived at a decision one day to take their father out for sale. Approaching the place, they observed a little bird perching on the top of a bamboo, and the father said: "When the bamboo shoots grow, they do not forsake the old stem; nor do the young birds desert their old. How could you have the heart to desert me?" After hearing the words of their father, the two showed remorse and took their father home. However, the situation at home grew worse, and the two wanted to leave home for some other place in order to make a living. So they took out some rice and meat, and said to their father: "We two are going away; the rice and meat are kept for you to eat." Thus they left. Later, the father was swallowed by some water monster when he went to bathe in a pond.

One day, the two brothers returned home. They found some manure left on the ground by their father, but failed to see his person. They carried the manure out and came to a village house. They told the landlord: "We are leaving this in your place. It is medicine, and do not let your dog eat it. Otherwise, you will have to repay us." Consequently, the landlord strapped his dog to a post. He did not expect that the two brothers would free the dog while he was not watching. So the manure was eaten by the dog. The two then reasoned with the landlord and asked for compensation. The landlord had no alternative but to repay them with gold and silver, which the two refused. When iron was offered, they accepted.

The two went to work on the iron by the pond. In the meanwhile,

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the eyes of the water monster were hurt as the water was polluted with iron. So a crab was sent to negotiate with the two and to ask them not to use the water. The two paid no heed, and furthermore, they snatched the crab with a pair of tongs. The crab was pained and jumped into the water. The water monster then sent a fish. The two said: "If your old man (meaning the water monster) has eye trouble, he better come to speak for himself." Thereupon, the water monster came out. (The water monster was actually a dragon.) At that time, the two snatched the dragon with the pair of tongs and wounded it slightly. The dragon then promised to give the two brothers some fish to eat. The older brother wanted to have them fried, but the younger brother wanted to have them boiled. They disagreed and walked apart, each going a different direction.

The older brother went up a river, and saw on one of the banks a tree, on which there was a mother monkey, holding two baby monkeys in her arms. He said to the mother monkey: "I love your sons very much. Would you give them to me?" The mother monkey, not knowing that it was one of his tricks, let the baby monkeys down to the ground. He instantly stamped them to death with his feet and took the mother monkey as his wife. His younger brother went toward another direction. He came to a village, but found no sign of inhabitants there. /As it happened,/ they had been eaten up by the ghosts. Then he found two maidens prostrating underneath a hog trough, but knew not whether they were human beings or ghosts. He pricked their ears with a needle, and they bled. He thus learned they were human. He asked them why there was no one in the village. They answered: "All were eaten by the ghosts but us two. We had hidden ourselves underneath the hog trough and were spared." He asked: "What kind of ghosts are those that exercise this evil influence?" The maidens said: "We cannot dry white cloths in the sun for then the ghosts would appear. Neither can we pound rice. The sound would also cause the ghosts to appear." He did not believe it and told the maidens to get some white cloths to sun them. /11/ To be sure, ghosts came flying in the shape of eagles. He hurriedly killed them with some instruments. When rice was pounded, long-haired monsters appeared. He chopped them all into two sections, but they were reunited and fled. By this time, the ghosts who were either killed or fled, could no longer play their devilish tricks. So the two sisters promised to marry him. The older sister had previously received from their mother a wooden pestle with one end round and the other pointed.

One touch with the pointed end would resurrect a dead man whereas one touch with the round end meant death. The pointed end was used on the villagers who all came back to life. Stems of the willow tree were cut into the shapes of knife and fork and planted at the entrance to the village. Thus, the ghosts could no longer enter the village to cast their devilish influence. This is how the wooden knives and forks at the entrance of an Aka village had their origin. 773 539

The younger brother took the two maidens with him and started for home. On the way, a mother monkey was seen washing his older brother's wrapping towel. He was surprised and questioned it. The mother monkey said: "It is your brother's personal belonging. What has it to do with you?" The younger brother broke into a great rage, killed the mother monkey and ate it. Upon his return, he told it to his older brother. The older brother said: "True, it was my woman." Hearing that it was killed by his kid brother, he sank into a profound sorrow. Moreover, he feared revenge by the numerous relatives of the mother monkey. He then asked his kid brother for a woman for compensation among the two maidens. The younger brother consented, but he privately smeared black charcoal on the face of the beautiful one, while he cleaned and dressed up the ugly one. The older brother was deceived and married the woman who was carefully dressed up. Before long, the relatives of the mother monkey came; they bawled and railed. The younger brother came up with a plot. He had the rocks burned red hot and then asked the monkeys to sit down on them. Consequently, the buttocks of the monkeys were all heated to redness. This was the origin of monkeys with red buttocks.

2. Pan-chung.

Once there were two brothers who, while taking a walk, encountered suddenly a strong wind. The two said: "Whence comes this strong wind? We better find out its origin." Consequently, they walked toward the direction where the wind came. As they approached a ledge, they found it was large and had a huge cave from which came the wind. The two brothers, facing the wind, entered, and found it was dark at first. As they went further it brightened all of a sudden. The two lost their footing and fell to the roof of a house, which happened to be their aunt's. The aunt, who had been missing for quite a long while, was kidnapped by some monster. When she saw them she asked: "Why have you come here?" They answered:

To hunt wild boar." The aunt said: "Please, don't ever say such a thing. This monster is very ferocious. You might as well come and see your second uncle."

Before long, they observed the limping approach of a great cock. Their aunt said: "This is your second uncle." The cock seemed pleased to see the two, but said: "Since my nephews are here, you must do something for me to show your talents." So the two were sent to sow grains on a farm and were told to cover in a day ten mou of land. The two, figuring that it was really impossible to finish sowing on such a large tract of land, became worried and frightened. The aunt told them privately: "It will be all right. I will order some little demons to help you. But you better have a good sleep outside the wooden fence." When the two woke up, they observed that the grains had already been sowed. Then they were ordered to cut down bamboo groves, and with the assistance of their aunt, they were able to chop down an entire hill of bamboos. These were carried back to their aunt's house, and with them a number of pigeon cages were plaited. Their second uncle, who was out looking for some people to eat as he had done daily, returned in the evening and was very much pleased with it. He then asked for their wishes. The answer was that they had been away from home too long and would like to get out of the cave and go home. The cock, thereupon, presented them each with nine dumplings of glutinous rice. As the cave was below in the ledge, it required a lot of climbing to get out. With the rice dumplings they could induce the birds and beasts to help them to get out of the cave. Thus, the two bade farewell to their aunt and set out.

At first it was rather difficult; but as they had climbed up a layer, they encountered a turtle dove to which they offered a rice dumpling for its help. But the turtle dove, holding the rice dumpling in its beak, left them without further ado. Fortunately, a shrew-mouse came and leading the two by their clothings, helped them up. The two were grateful and gave the shrew-mouse as gifts a rice dumpling and a flute which they had carried with them. /12/ In the meanwhile the turtle dove had seen this from a distance and flew back to ask for the flute. The two said: "If you fly away after getting the flute, what then?" The turtle dove said: "You may hold on to my tail so I cannot run away." Therefore, the two held on to its tail before they gave it the flute. As the turtle dove got the flute, it tried again, despite the promise, to fly away. But the two held fast onto its tail and thus made the gradual ascent. As they were approaching the mouth of the cave,

they could see the sky and the land; but the tail of the turtle dove gave away at their violent pull, thus leaving the turtle dove free to fly away. By this time, they had reached the mouth of the cave and were able to crawl out. Consequently, today the cooing of the turtle dove is like that of a flute; but it has no tail. The shrew-mouse likes to eat rice but cannot cry. All the creatures in the world were produced from this cave, and so were the winds.

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776 accordance with their appearance, they may be the images we see in a dream, the shape of a particular thing, or without any shape at all. The corner of the clothes, the dirt on the human body, the air we exhale, insects, fallen leaves, any animal, or any man-made article can all represent gods. In a word, the Ch'iang beliefs remain in the stage of animsim and fetishism. Some say that the Ch'iang beliefs have reached the stage of monotheism. (1) This

1. T. Torrance, "The Basic Spiritual Conceptions of the Religion of the Ch'iang," (Lecture delivered to the West China Border Research Society, May 12, 1924). In this article, the author considers the Ch'iang as a monotheistic people like the Jews and denies that the Ch'iang have animism.

view is not correct. Moreover, the fact that the Ch'iang have sorcerers and sorcery fits into this kind of beliefs. If there were no such beliefs, the Ch'iang sorcerers and sorcery would have no reason for their existence. The so-called witchcraft religion is the general term for this kind of beliefs and sorcery. There are numerous examples like this among primitive peoples of the world.

1. The White Stone God and the Sacred Forest

[212] The Ch'iang tribesmen have only a spoken language but no
776 written one. Therefore, so far as their past is concerned, we have
773 to search for it among their folk songs, stories, and legends. The origin of the beliefs in the White Stone God and the Sacred Forest can also be found in their legends and folk songs. According to legends, the Ch'iang once had a great migration, in which they were scattered in all directions. A group of them, after having settled down, met a rival tribe called "Ko-jen" (2) who were dumb but

2. "Ko" is a phonetic transcription. The Ch'iang's victory over the Ko-jen was a crucial event in their national regeneration. So, up to now, the Ch'iang are still very happy to talk about it. It is said that the physiological traits of the Ko tribesmen are: big and hard bones; high eyebrow bones; a high forehead; teeth as big as a thumb; a very thick skull; a very short neck; hairs as

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dark and thick as a horse's mane; eyes always looking up and unable to look horizontally which can be done only by bowing the head; vertical eyes; and a tail which indicates the approaching of death by its gradual withering. From the social and cultural point of view, the Ko tribesmen raised no cattle; knew how to sow but were not good at reaping; ate fruits, grass and roots; took rain and dew for drink; did not know how to make fire by striking stones (they tried to learn it from the Ch'iang but failed); had no spirit of cooperation; lived in caves; and, after death, were buried in bottomless stone coffins. It is difficult to determine what race the Ko were. We can only preserve their legends and wait for the investigation later by scholars.

strong. The Ch'iang were afraid of them and were thinking of running away from them. Fortunately, in their dreams, the Ch'iang received from a god a revelation which showed them how to fight the war. The Ch'iang followed the god's direction and annihilated the Ko tribe. The method revealed by the god to defeat the Ko was quite simple, that is, first using hard clubs and then white stones. The Ko tribe was annihilated and the Ch'iang were then able to live happily in peace. So the people gave cheers such as "We are fine, we are happy, we are strong..." The leader of the Ch'iang was afraid that the people might fall into the abyss of "dying of peace and pleasure" and suggested to repay the god for his blessings so as to show their gratitude to the source of their happiness and also to warn the people of their danger. However, the people knew only that their ancestors received a revelation from the god. /11/ They did not know what god it was, nor did they know how the god looked like. So they said, "We call the god but the god cannot answer. What should we call the god?" Their leader asked, "What weapons did our ancestors use to defeat the Ko?" The people answered, "With hard clubs and white stones we beat the Ko." The leader said, "Since we beat the Ko with white stones, we should return our thanks to the white stones." All the people agreed and each brought back a white stone. The leader then said, "The white stone is our god. From now on whenever you have troubles or difficulties, you may pray to

776 the White Stone God. The god, to whom the Ch'iang wanted to
•773 give thanks, was the one who directed them to defeat the Ko. Since the god had no concrete appearance, they used the white stone as a symbol. After all, the white stone was the weapon with which they defeated the enemies at the god's direction. Here we see that the Ch'iang worship of the white stone has a profound meaning and an historical basis.

776 The Ch'iang people now use the term "White Stone God," or rho-pi-tzé. It seems as if they regard the white stone as god. Actually, the white stone is only a symbol of god, and not a god by itself. What we should like to find out is what god it was who helped the Ch'iang defeat the Ko. The legends give no explanation of such a god. As the Ch'iang people, having met the god only in dreams, did not know while awake who the god was, so they said, "He is the protector; but who is he?" And they also said, "He is God." Here we see the people actually did not know what god he was. However, there is no doubt that the Ch'iang tribesmen have always regarded this god as their guardian deity ever since their victory over the Ko.
(3) /The figure 3 for Note 3 is missing in the text. I presume this is

> 3. Now in Li-fan hsien, at Hou-yu-k'u-shang-san-li, among the nine gods on the roof of the Ch'iang, one is the god of directing war called Ta-la. According to what is said, this is the god who directed the victorious war against the Ko. This saying, this writer suspects, is a later addition, for different gods are worshiped on the roofs in different places but there is only one legend of the Ch'iang like this.

the logical place for it. -- translator's note./

According to legends, the Ch'iang once abandoned their worship of the white stones. This was the period when "men did not worship gods and gods did not care for men." The Ch'iang then returned to their worship of the Forest God, or mei-be-tzé. (It is said that before they worshiped the White Stone God, the Ch'iang worshiped this god.)
[782] There was a definite code of ceremony--sacrificing a lamb, spreading its blood, but prohibiting the eating of its flesh which was either burned to ashes or thrown away in the wilderness. They also composed a standard version of benediction. Sacrifice was held in the Sacred Forest regardless of the weather. Later they built a public temple called wa-gi.

776 (4) Women in charge of the sacrifice to the God of Granary. (This may be considered as a custom derived from women's association with agriculture.)

3. Local Gods

We have mentioned before that in the old times each clan of the Ch'iang tribesmen lived in a village of their own. Nowadays a Ch'iang village is not necessarily confined to a clan. However, in each locality there are local gods, sorcerers and ceremonies. It is to be noted that the local gods can be classified into male and female deities, or good and evil spirits. Because of the threats and blessings of those gods, sorcerers become an indispensable profession. Based upon our survey, we select among the good and evil gods of different localities the following examples so as to give a general picture of them.

/14/ Examples of good gods:

La-hua-chai	Be-mée-tzé	God of the Master /of the House/.
Hua-peng-chai	Wa-ba-tzé	God of City Wall.
Wen-shan-chai	Ü-nga-tzé	God of Peacock.
Tseng-t'ou-shang-chai	Shǐ-gǔ-tzé	God of Iron Mountain.
Tseng-t'ou-chung-chai	Lü-wa-tzé	God of Communication.
Tseng-t'ou-hsia-chai	Sha-bo-tzé	God of Piled Stones (stones piled together).
Jo-ta-chai	Mǔ-be-tzé	God of Pine Trees. (sacrifices held jointly with Chia-shan-chai and Hsi-shan-chai.)
Shui-t'ien-chai	H-kuei-dee-tze	God of the Carried-back Cock. (Joint sacrifice with Ch'i-li-chai.)
Kan-ch'i-chai	Ru-bou-tze	God of Deep Cliff.

776 Each local god has a legend of his origin. Take the following examples:

773 The Legend of the Origin of the Local God in Shui-t'ien-chai and Ch'i-li-chai--A man from Shui-t'ien-chai and another from Ch'i-li-chai worked together as carriers. One day, passing Yu-ch'i (the Ch'iang call Yu-ch'i "Hunsh"), on their way home, the two felt their burden very heavy. As they were grumbling, they heard suddenly

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the crowing of a cock. They turned their heads and saw a white cock. But as they walked back to look at it closely, they found that it was a white stone. So they left it alone and went away. They did not get far before they heard again the crowing. So they turned back again, and again saw the white stone. Thus they walked back and forth several times. Finally, they prayed to the white stone, "White stone, if you are a god, please lighten our burden. We are willing to carry you back home." Then they carried the stone back and felt their burden very light indeed. When they reached the suspension rope /bridge/ at T'ung-hua-ch'ang (the Ch'iang call it Wa dee), they tried in vain several times to tie the stone on the rope. Suddenly, they saw the white stone turn into a cock that flew and alighted on the slope at Shui-t'ien-chai, and there became again a white stone. But, still it looked like a cock from a distance. The two told their fellow villagers about it. They were all surprised and so worshiped it as a god.

The Legend of the Origin of the Local God at Chia-shan, Jo-ta, and Hsi-shan--In ancient times, in the land of "gi-da", there lived six or seven clans (rŭghŭlŭgo; rorobe; wágo, now Chia-shan; jio-da, now Jo-ta; yar-ba-da; thí-ru-be; i-zu-wá-be) in close neighborhood. Pine trees flourished there and people chopped down their branches at random. Therefore, the God of Pine Trees told the villagers in their dreams, "I am the God of Pine Trees. If you chop down pine trees carelessly, I will punish you." Having had this dream, the people found themselves in a predicament. They asked among themselves where their source of income would be if they did not chop down trees. There were so many pine trees, and they had no way to know which trees belonged to the God. Therefore, those who did not believe in the God still went to the mountains to chop down trees. But from time to time, unfortunate accidents happened to them. One year after the fall harvest, an old man was seen walking to and fro in the forest and then suddenly disappeared. People believed that the God of Trees had come. So they made a vow and asked the tuan-kung /priest/ to offer sacrifice in the temple of the Sacred Forest. During the sacrificial ceremony, while the programs were going on, a participant of the ceremony was suddenly seized with a frenzy and declared, "I am working for God. You do not know where the God's tree is, but I know it." Then he took a large flag and climbed up a big tree. He reached the top of the tree, planted the flag on the top, and came down safely to the ground. He also declared that from now on sacrifice to the God of Trees should be held every year so that their land

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would be safe and peaceful. Not long afterwards, the man's frenzy /15/ disappeared and he was himself again. People were in sympathy with him and gave him a lamb's kidney and a bottle of oil used in the sacrifice.

The Legend of the Origin of the Local God in Kan-ch'i--Kan-ch'i-chai originally had a temple of the King of Chickens (Yu-i-nga). It was destroyed by mountain torrents and not restored because of the lack of funds. The Chicken King was therefore moved to the backyard of the Temple of King Yu at Wen-shan-chai in T'ung-hua. People in Kan-ch'i still went there to pray and sacrifice every year, but they felt that the Chicken King was no longer efficacious. A patient who also felt that the Chicken King no longer had protective power suggested that the sacrifice be stopped. However, a devoted worshiper insisted that the Chicken King was still effective. He went alone to the God of the Chicken King at Wen-shan and prayed for the above mentioned patient, saying: "You are our original local god. The patient in our village hopes that you will still protect him!" The night after his return from praying he and the patient received a revelation from the God of the Chicken King in their dreams. The god said, "I am now no longer your god. I can protect you temporarily. The name of your god is ru-bou-tze. He will arrive here on the mountain in the eighth month of the next year. Under a rock there is water. He will come out of the water." The next morning the two told each other of their dreams and went together to find the spot which evidently was there. Later, the patient recovered. The harvest that year was very rich. The two could not forget what the god had revealed to them in the dreams and often walked to and fro beside the water even before the coming of the eighth month in the hope of seeing the arrival of the god. For a long time they did not see anything. One day they again heard the god say to them in a dream, "Ru-bou-tze, your god, has been drifting on the water for half a month!" Waking up, they asked a waterside wood-cutter about it. The wood-cutter said, "There has been indeed a piece of wood floating on the water for a long time and I could not catch it." The next day the two got a piece of wood beside the river and suspected that it was the god. But the wood was rotten. Some spectators suggested to have it cut and burned, but the two said that since they had dreamed about it, it should not be treated carelessly. That night they got another dream from the god. The god said, "I am in the wood. Peel off the rotten wood outside and you will see my body." They did so the next day and got an image of the god. Now people in Kan-ch'i substitute this god for the Sacred Forest, and they no longer erect a white stone.

791 773 The reason why the tuan-kung wears a monkey-skin hat(jar-tă), worships a monkey-headed old master, and beats a sheepskin drum (i-bou) is as follows: -- According to legends, the tuan-kung, having obtained sacred books, took a rest on his way home and fell asleep. At that moment a white sheep came and ate up the sacred books. When he woke up and did not see the books, he realized that they were already in the sheep's stomach. Unable to find a way out, he cried. Then came a gold-striped monkey who asked the tuan-kung why he cried. The tuan-kung told the monkey what had happened. The monkey said, "You can buy this white sheep, eat up its meat alone by yourself and make a drum with its skin. Every time you beat the drum, you will recall one sentence in the sacred books."/17/ The tuan-kung did as he was told and remembered indeed all the words in the sacred books. Later, the tuan-kung again wept because of his shortage of traveling expenses. The gold-striped monkey came again and led him home. After the death of the monkey, the tuan-kung, to show his gratitude to the monkey, made a hat with the monkey's skin, and using the monkey's tail, he made three pointed corners on the hat: from left to right, the first corner was called pi-ngi-shĭr (meaning a clear distinction between black and white); the second 778 was called mo-bi (heaven); and the third ru-bu (earth). Then he 791 wrapped the monkey's head in paper and worshiped it (adding one more wrapping of white paper after each sacrifice) and called it Old Master (abe-tcha-h-kou).

[292] When the tuan-kung is sacrificing to the gods or redeeming a vow, he wears the monkey-skin hat. But in exorcising evils, he wears a kind of hat made of bamboo, pasted with a five-colored paper. It is called tan-tsu. In many places the tuan-kung wears the same kind of colored hat as the lama's. This may be the result of cross-cultural influence.

The sacred wand, or sĕr-ko-ta-bo, is one of the tuan-kung's important instruments. The length of the wand ranges from four to five feet. On its top is a figure of god made of iron or bronze. Under the god's head hangs a bronze bell. The end of the wand is a spear-head which can be thrust into the soil. This is used in exorcism, conveying souls, curing diseases, and war. An old tuan-kung also uses it in dancing to the god. But it cannot be used in sacrificing to the good gods.

The magic bell or sounding plate (shi-tsai-la) is made of bronze. But the hammer inside is made of cow's horn and is attached to an iron chain, which is connected with the handle. The latter is decorated